

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A search system comprising:
2 a plurality of user profiles each defining
3 preferences of a respective individual user or group of
4 users; and
5 a recommender adapted to selectively employ two
6 or more of the plurality of user profiles in combination
7 when searching for content suggestions.

1 2. The search system according to claim 1, wherein
2 the recommender employs the two or more user profiles in
3 combination by averaging ratings for each rated attribute
4 within the two or more individual user profiles.

1 3. The search system according to claim 1, wherein
2 the recommender employs the two or more user profiles in
3 combination by:

4 applying limits within only one of the two or
5 more user profiles when searching for content suggestions;

6 weighting ratings for each rated attribute within
7 one of the two or more user profiles greater than
8 corresponding ratings within remaining user profiles from
9 the two or more user profiles; or

10 weighting ratings for selected rated attributes
11 within each of the two or more user profiles greater than
12 ratings for remaining rated attributes within each of the
13 two or more user profiles.

1 4. The search system according to claim 1, wherein
2 the recommender is adapted to selectively employ group
3 profiles defined as a combination of two or more of the
4 plurality of user profiles by employing the two or more
5 user profiles in combination when searching for content
6 suggestions.

1 5. The search system according to claim 1, wherein
2 at least one of the two or more user profiles employed in
3 combination when searching for content suggestions is
4 retrieved from another system.

1 6. The search system according to claim 1, wherein
2 the two or more user profiles may be either explicit or
3 implicit profiles.

1 7. The search system according to claim 1, wherein
2 one of the user profiles is a profile for a group of users.

1 8. The search system according to claim 1, wherein
2 one of the user profiles includes at least first and second
3 portions, each of the first and second portions designated
4 as publicly available for combination with any other user
5 profile, restricted to combination only with specified user
6 profiles, or restricted from combination with any other
7 user profile.

1 9. A video receiver comprising:

2 an input for receiving content and a plurality of
3 information items regarding the content;

4 a plurality of individual user profiles each
5 defining preferences of a respective individual user; and

6 a recommender adapted to selectively employ two
7 or more of the plurality of individual user profiles in
8 combination when evaluating the information items to
9 generate content suggestions.

10 10. The video receiver according to claim 9, wherein
11 the recommender employs the two or more individual user
12 profiles in combination by averaging ratings for each rated
13 attribute within the two or more individual user profiles.

1 11. The video receiver according to claim 9, wherein
2 the recommender employs the two or more individual user
3 profiles in combination by:

4 applying limits within only one of the two or
5 more individual user profiles when searching for content
6 suggestions;

7 weighting ratings for each rated attribute within
8 one of the two or more individual user profiles greater
9 than corresponding ratings within remaining individual user
10 profiles from the two or more individual user profiles; or

11 weighting ratings for selected rated attributes
12 within each of the two or more individual user profiles
13 greater than ratings for remaining rated attributes within
14 each of the two or more individual user profiles.

1 12. The video receiver according to claim 9, wherein
2 the recommender is adapted to selectively employ group
3 profiles defined as a combination of two or more of the
4 plurality of individual user profiles by employing the two
5 or more individual user profiles in combination when
6 evaluating the information items to generate content
7 suggestions.

1 13. The video receiver according to claim 9, wherein
2 at least one of the two or more individual user profiles
3 employed in combination when evaluating the information
4 items to generate content suggestions is retrieved from
5 another system.

1 14. A method of processing information items
2 comprising:

3 receiving content and a plurality of information
4 items regarding the content;

5 accessing a plurality of individual user profiles
6 each defining preferences of a respective individual user;
7 and

8 selectively employing two or more of the
9 plurality of individual user profiles in combination when
10 evaluating the information items to generate content
11 suggestions.

1 15. The method according to claim 14, wherein the two
2 or more individual user profiles are employed in
3 combination by averaging ratings for each rated attribute
4 within the two or more individual user profiles.

1 16. The method according to claim 14, wherein the two
2 or more individual user profiles are employed in
3 combination by:

4 applying limits within only one of the two or
5 more individual user profiles when searching for content
6 suggestions;

7 weighting ratings for each rated attribute within
8 one of the two or more individual user profiles greater
9 than corresponding ratings within remaining individual user
10 profiles from the two or more individual user profiles; or

11 weighting ratings for selected rated attributes
12 within each of the two or more individual user profiles
13 greater than ratings for remaining rated attributes within
14 each of the two or more individual user profiles.

1 17. The method according to claim 14, further
2 comprising:

3 selectively employing group profiles defined as a
4 combination of two or more of the plurality of individual
5 user profiles by employing the two or more individual user
6 profiles in combination when evaluating the information
7 items to generate content suggestions.

1 18. The method according to claim 14, further
2 comprising:

3 retrieving at least one of the two or more
4 individual user profiles employed in combination when
5 evaluating the information items to generate content
6 suggestions from another system.

1 19. A signal comprising:

2 a listing of content suggestions relating to
3 content and a plurality of information items regarding the
4 content,

5 wherein two or more of a plurality of individual
6 user profiles each defining preferences of a respective
7 individual user are selectively employed in combination
8 when evaluating the information items to generate the
9 listing of content suggestions.

20. The signal according to claim 19, wherein the two
or more individual user profiles are employed in
combination by averaging ratings for each rated attribute
within the two or more individual user profiles.

1 21. The signal according to claim 19, wherein the two
2 or more individual user profiles are employed in
3 combination by:

4 applying limits within only one of the two or
5 more individual user profiles when searching for content
6 suggestions;

7 weighting ratings for each rated attribute within
8 one of the two or more individual user profiles greater
9 than corresponding ratings within remaining individual user
10 profiles from the two or more individual user profiles; or

11 weighting ratings for selected rated attributes
12 within each of the two or more individual user profiles
13 greater than ratings for remaining rated attributes within
14 each of the two or more individual user profiles.

1 22. The signal according to claim 19, wherein group
2 profiles defined as two or more of the plurality of
3 individual user profiles employed in combination are
4 utilized when evaluating the information items to generate
5 the listing of content suggestions.

1 23. The signal according to claim 19, wherein at
2 least one of the two or more individual user profiles
3 employed in combination when evaluating the information
4 items to generate content suggestions is retrieved from a
5 remote system.